

TO: EZIZ Users
FROM: CDPH
SUBJECT: Flu Season Likely to be Severe
DATE: 12/8/14

Flu Season Likely to be Severe. CDC is Urging Everyone to Get Vaccinated Against Flu.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urges immediate influenza vaccination for anyone still unvaccinated this season and recommends prompt treatment with antiviral drugs for people at high risk of complications who develop flu, as early data suggests that the current 2014-2015 flu season could be severe:

- So far this season, influenza A H3N2 viruses have been most common. For comparison, the 2012-2013, 2007-2008, and 2003-2004 seasons were all predominated by H3N2 strains and had the highest seasonal mortality levels of the past decade.
- In addition, roughly half of the season's H3N2 viruses that have been analyzed are 'drifted' with antigenic differences from this season's vaccine H3N2 virus. The vaccine's ability to prevent infection with drifted H3N2 virus may be reduced. Even so, immunizations given in past seasons against drifted viruses have still reduced the severity of disease or prevented many infections.

December 7-13, 2014 is National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW), a national observance that highlights the importance of continuing influenza vaccination. CDC offers a variety of [resources for Flu Prevention Partners](#) including 2014 NIVW Key Points, posters, brochures, ecards, buttons, and the [NIVW Media Toolkit](#).

Thank you for continuing to recommend flu vaccination this season. For your most apprehensive patients, CDC offers the following tips:

You may hear: **"It's too late for me to get protection from a flu vaccination this season."**

Tip for how to respond:

Flu seasons are unpredictable. They can last late into the spring. As long as flu season isn't over, it's not too late to get vaccinated, even during the winter. Getting a flu vaccine is the best way to protect yourself and your family. If you miss getting your flu vaccine in the fall, make it a New Year's resolution—flu season doesn't usually peak until January or February and can last until May.

You may hear: **"I don't trust that the vaccine is safe."**

Tip for how to respond:

Flu vaccines have been given for more than 50 years and they have a very good safety track record. Flu vaccines are made the same way each year and their safety is closely monitored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration. Hundreds of millions of flu vaccines have been given safely.

You may hear: “I’m Healthy. I don’t need a flu vaccine.”

Tip for how to respond:

Anyone can become sick with the flu and experience serious complications. Older people, young children, pregnant women and people with medical conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, or kidney disease are at especially high risk from the flu, but kids, teens and adults who are active and healthy also can get the flu and become very ill from it. Flu viruses are unpredictable, and every season puts you at risk. Besides, you might be around someone who’s at high risk from the flu...a baby...your grandparents, or even a friend. You don’t want to be the one spreading flu, do you?

For more information on flu, please visit www.flu.gov.

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